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effected from that culture area. It seems likely that at least the northern portion of the 173
Northwest Coast area (Tlingit and Haida) and the adjacent interior Athapaskan cultures enjoyed a common origin in Alaska and that at some time a culture prototypical to these moved up the Alaskan river systems. From the headwaters of the Yukon we may then postulate two streams of migration, one down the Chilkat, Taku, and other rivers to the Pacific coast and another into the intermontane basin. A third course of migration probably proceeded eastward from central Alaska and may have been the stream that brought the Kutchin and Mackenzie River peoples to the further inland area.[10] Since this early period there have, of course, been many many other movements into and out of the area. Our informant may be referring to one such known movement of Tlingit to the Pelly River when he traces the descent of his people from such an amalgamation.[11]

Aboriginal culture.[12] Prior to European contact, Kaska society was organized into a 174
number of autonomous, fluid bands consisting essentially of a nuclear family with such additional relatives as sons-in-law, parents' siblings, and aged grandparents. The band lacked formal organization, leadership being exercised by a mature man, who was also a capable hunter. The remaining members were probably held together as much by guarantees of subsistence as by the emotional ties of kinship. Little organization other than some ties of kinship operated between bands. Such kinship ties gained their emotional reinforcement primarily from frequent interpersonal contact, but had no direct function in binding together the various bands constituting a tribe. Tribal identification was relatively weak and depended primarily on close similarity of dialect. A matrilineal, dichotomous social organization prevailed in the western portion of the Kaska area (including the Frances Lake, Dease River, and Upper Liard River tribes) but was of limited social importance.

In summer a number of bands of one or more adjoining tribes assembled around a fish lake that guaranteed a fairly dependable food supply. From this base the men could go out to hunt and the women could set lines of rabbit snares. In the fall these larger units broke up, and small bands or individual families traveled to the surrounding mountains where large numbers of groundhog and gopher were snared, dried, and cached for winter use. Moose were hunted with snares and bows and arrows and the meat preserved for later consumption. With the onset of winter, the families once more congregated at a fish lake and here spent the coldest part of the year. Occasionally young men were sent to the moun-

[10] Such a theory is not incompatible with Sapir's inference from linguistic sources tracing the Tlingit, Haida, and Athapaskan languages to a proto-Na-dene language (Sapir, *The Na-dene Languages, A Preliminary Report* [1915], 537-538). It is interesting to note that Teit's Tahltan informants reported that the Tlingit formerly "occupied from time immemorial a considerable part of the interior north of the Tahltans, including most of the drainage basin of the Taku, and nearly all the north-western headwaters of the Yukon, north almost to latitude 62 and east to the Pelly Mountains and the height of land dividing Teslin waters from the Upper Liard." Teit, *On Tahltan (Athabaskan) Work*, 1912 (1912), 482. My own theory has been very strongly influenced through discussions with Professor Osgood.

[11] Old Moe's paternal grandfather was a Tagish (or interior Tlingit) Indian. Projection of his own ancestry into tribal history may, therefore, have led to confusion regarding traditional history. His maternal grandmother, however, was an Upper Liard woman.

[12] This memorial represents a very brief abstract of a larger body of data which is now being prepared for publication.

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179 min caches to bring back a supply of meat. Winter was also a time when caribou were hunted and sometimes men traveled up to the mountains to secure goats and sheep. The food supply, however, was not sufficient to eliminate some periods of starvation. In such emergencies, the people sought for neighboring bands who might still have a supply of meat. When food was really scarce some people even ate human flesh but they were punished if their deed was discovered.

Men set weirs and nets for fish, hunted, and made the necessary implements and weapons to carry out these and other activities, while women collected supplementary tubers and berries, made camp, and helped pack the household equipment or draw the toboggans. Women also prepared the clothing, utilizing the tanned skins of the moose and caribou and furs of the fox, marten, wolverine, lynx, and rabbit. Clothing was tailored and consisted essentially of a long dress with leggins for the woman and a coat and trousers for the man. Both sexes wore parkas, breech cloths, moccasins, and a variety of headgear. Personal appearance was enhanced by tattooing and piercing the nose and ears for bone and wood plugs. Men and women painted their cheeks and wore simple bone and tooth armbands and necklaces. The hair was not cut, but men removed their facial hair.

Aboriginal Kaska society was completely dependent on environmental resources for food, clothing and tools. Each family constituted an independent economic unit, capable of preparing required artifacts and carrying out all the routines necessary for survival. Two related families commonly shared the temporary branch lean-tos which were the standard dwellings. The floors were covered with spruce brush, upon which beaver and other furs were spread for bedding. Fire was made by striking together two pieces of rock and catching the spark in dry tinder; when traveling in cold weather women carried fire on poles. Cooking utensils consisted mainly of spruce bark vessels in which water was heated by means of hot stones or of woven spruce root kettles hung quite high above the fire.

Travel was essential to the economic life. Temporary spruce bark canoes, rafts, dugouts, and boats made of untanned mooseshides were used on the water. Rude log bridges were built across the narrow streams. In winter snowshoes were indispensable for the deep powdery snow and wooden and frozen skin toboggans were also used. Small children were carried in mooseshide sacks lined with moss.

Although the lack of tribal organization and formal social control made interpersonal quarrels within the society inevitable, overt ingroup hostility was kept to a minimum by the individual's own personal distaste for aggression. Between neighboring Indian groups, like the Tahltan and Pelly River people, mutual fear and suspicion were rife and often flared into sporadic warfare motivated by a need for vengeance or the desire for women. While women were taken captive in war, men and children were usually killed and often callously tortured. Scalping and the degradation of enemy corpses were common features of warfare.

The arts included wood carving, pyrogravure, porcupine quill work, and rock painting. Dancing was a feature of the potlatch, a celebration commemorating a deceased relative and marked by the exchange of food and manufactured objects between moieties. At these festivals, which were observed only by the western Kaska bands, the dancers used wooden masks or skin costumes. The tambourine drum was the only musical instrument. Songs were composed to express love and mourning as well as for amusement. Hide-the-stick

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gambling games were very popular. Other sports included wrestling, boat racing, tug of war, 179
hide and seek, and skill or strength contests.

Marriages, including those with captive women, were regulated by rules of moiety exogamy and incest avoidance, but unions between certain cross-cousins were favored as were marriages between two sisters and two brothers. Residence in marriage was generally matrilocal and unions were not final until a period of bride service had elapsed. Polygyny was practiced by men whose hunting ability enabled them to secure sufficient food and skins to support two wives and many children. Plural wives were always sisters. Preferential polyandry was reserved to under such special circumstances as that of an old man who was too weak to supply all the resources required by his family.

The conception of the supernatural revolved around the recognition of a number of beings, some of which were believed hostile while others were regarded as friendly. Special respect was also extended to certain animals, including the otter, mink, and weasel. These animals were never killed. A belief in a supreme deity was loosely developed, but individuals relied primarily on their own supernaturally derived power for security and help. Such power enabled men to hunt successfully and also functioned in curing. A wide variety of ritual observances were associated with hunting activities not the least of which was avoidance of the danger which a woman and her biological functions held for a man's power. Sexual abstinence preceded and followed hunting, while during menstruation and parturition women were isolated. As menarche a girl used a quill tube for drinking water and scratched herself with a stick rather than with her fingers. Every person was a potential shaman who could cure illness through his supernatural power. Certain curers, however, attained greater prestige than others and men of this rank sometimes became rivals who competed in public conjuring. Shamans effected cures by sucking disease from the body, imparting their power to water which the patient drank, singing, and receiving confessions from the sick. Plant medicines were limited and were administered by anyone. Shamans could also sorcerize, but this behavior does not appear to have been widespread.

Death was attributed to both sorcery and natural causes. Old and infirm people might be abandoned and left to die. The corpse was buried in summer but cremated in cold weather. Following a husband's death, his widow underwent a period of restriction in which her activities were controlled by her brother-in-law whom she might later marry. After death the spirit of the deceased was believed to continue its existence in an afterworld.

Historic contacts. Kaska contacts with the Tlingit probably antedate the arrival of the 175
white man in the western part of the area. In the late eighteenth century, after the Euro- 177
peans had visited the Tlingit villages along the Alaska panhandle, these connections became intensified since the coastal Indians, including both Tlingit and Tahltan, became middlemen in the fur trade between the Europeans and the more interior groups. Two Tlingit tribes, the Taku and Stikine Indians, from their geographical position and reported evidence, may be assumed to have maintained such relations with the Kaska (Fig. 1). Furthest north were the Taku people, occupying the area around Taku Bay and lower Taku River.[9] Kaska sources that they went up the Taku River and across the high plateau

[9] There is some question if this refers to a branch of the Tlingit or to a Tahltan tribe which, according to Field and Jenness, later became infiltrated by Tlingit people. Today, in Lower Post, the Tsetsa Lake Taku are referred to as Tlingit. See Jenness, *The Indians of Canada* (1934), 396; Field, Unpublished Manuscript (1943).

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[Since this entire monograph is an ethnographic reconstruction, the source was not marked for category 174. For information concerning category 174, see category 116, source No. 6.]